



County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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January 28, 2004

DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

YVONNE BRATHWAITE BURKE
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

PUBLIC DEFENDER MANAGEMENT APPOINTMENT

Consistent with the August 4, 1998 Board-approved policy on managerial appointments, we have reviewed and recommend Board approval of the Public Defender's attached request to appoint Mr. John Vacca from his current position of Division Chief, Public Defender, Item 9259A, (A-2) to the position of Bureau Chief, Public Defender, Item 9260A, (A-3) at an annual salary of \$154,132.

Mr. Vacca has been successfully performing the duties of the Bureau Chief position since February 2003. In May 2003, pursuant to County Code Section 6.08.345, Mr. Vacca was appointed to the vacant and budgeted Bureau Chief position on a temporary basis and was provided a 5.5 percent salary increase in accordance with County Code Section 6.08.345, moving his salary from \$146,097 to \$154,132 for the duration of the temporary assignment. The permanent appointment of Mr. Vacca to the Bureau Chief position will place him within the third quartile of salary schedule A-3. As the 5.5 percent temporary increase will be removed and replaced with a 5.5 percent promotional increase, his salary will remain at \$154,132 and will not result in additional net County cost.

In accordance with the policy on managerial appointments, please advise this office if you would like this request placed on an upcoming agenda for Board action. Unless otherwise instructed by Friday, February 6, 2004, we will authorize the Public Defender to proceed with the appointment.

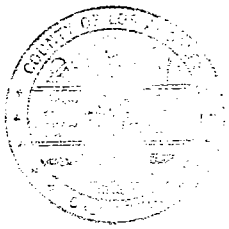
Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

DEJ:DL:ES
RMG:ljp

Attachment

c: Public Defender
Director of Personnel

appointment.bm



MICHAEL P. JUDGE
PUBLIC DEFENDER

LAW OFFICES
LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

210 W. TEMPLE STREET
19TH FLOOR
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 974-2801/FAX (213) 625-5031

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

January 8, 2004

RECEIVED
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TO: Debbie Lizzari
Assistant Administrative Officer
Chief Administrative Office

FROM: Michael P. Judge
Public Defender

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PROMOTION OF BUREAU CHIEF

In order to meet the critical needs of the Department, I am hereby requesting authorization to appoint John Vacca from the position of Division Chief, Public Defender to the position of Bureau Chief, Public Defender and compensate him at an annual salary of \$154,132.

Mr. Vacca is currently a Division Chief, Public Defender (Item No. 9259A, Salary Range A2), receiving annual compensation of \$154,132. Mr. Vacca has been performing all the duties of the vacant Bureau Chief position and many duties of an Assistant Public Defender since February 2003. I am requesting his permanent appointment to the Bureau Chief, Public Defender position at an annual salary of \$154,132. Mr. Vacca will continue to perform all duties of the Bureau Chief position and many duties of an Assistant Public Defender.

Mr. Vacca's total annual compensation of \$154,132 is comprised of an annual base salary of \$146,097 (\$12,174.72 monthly) and an Additional Responsibility Bonus of 5.5% or \$8,035 annually (\$669.61 monthly) that was approved by your office in May 2003. The Additional Responsibility Bonus was approved for Mr. Vacca's temporary assignment of the duties he will now be permanently assigned.

Mr. Vacca has been performing all the duties of the Bureau Chief position since February 2003. Due to strategic planning issues and departmental special projects, Mr. Vacca has also been and will continue to perform duties of an Assistant Public Defender. I have selected Mr. Vacca for the position based on his past performance as a key executive manager in the Department and the knowledge, skills and abilities he possesses. Mr. Vacca has been instrumental in controlling costs for the Public Defender and the General Fund of the County of Los Angeles and in improving the

quality of public justice services the County of Los Angeles provides to the public. The requested salary is commensurate with the duties Mr. Vacca is being asked to perform and the compensation being received by other departmental managers with lesser duties.

Mr. Vacca has been responsible for the assignment of approximately 700 Public Defender attorneys throughout the Los Angeles County court system. He has been primarily responsible for assuring the proper representation of adults and juveniles in the court system while maintaining the lowest possible numbers of cases in which the Public Defender must declare itself unavailable to represent clients based on the unavailability of attorneys. This entails an understanding and daily monitoring of ever constant changes in a number of factors, including caseloads of attorneys, attrition or medical leaves of attorneys, monitoring of attorney's stress levels based on workload or individual case assignments, changes in the court system, changes in District Attorney practices, etc.

Mr. Vacca has acted as a key manager in guiding the department through challenges it has faced, including court consolidation, the passing and implementation of Proposition 36, the creation of Drug Courts, legal representation for arrests and case filings during the Democratic Convention, the Rampart investigation, and various mental health issues. While being the assigned manager for Central Felonies, the largest operation in the Department, he implemented new policies and procedures to efficiently and effectively deal with these challenges. Some examples of his leadership in facing these challenges include some creative ideas which improved the quality of legal representation the department is able to provide while achieving them with the lowest possible cost to the County. As an example, he instituted a creative rearrangement of support staff and attorney staff who were assigned to Proposition 32 and the Drug Courts to achieve an economies of scale which allowed the existing support staff to meet new workload needs and new attorney staffing within the Department's existing resources.

He has consistently assumed duties beyond the scope of his assignments with the professionalism and dedication that one could only hope for from managers. As an example, he accepted the responsibility for issues related to the Rampart scandal and investigation while maintaining his other assigned duties prior to the Public Defender's creation of its Public Integrity Assurance Unit. In addition to this being an overwhelming workload, the Rampart investigation was uncharted territory for the justice and legal community. Mr. Vacca exhibited not only the leadership and managerial skills needed to deal with this situation, but also the strong legal ethics and knowledge which have proven him to be an invaluable manager in this department.

Debbie Lizzari
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Mr. Vacca has been consistently involved with creative ideas which have benefitted the clients represented by the Public Defender, improved the court system and resulted in costs savings to the County of Los Angeles. He was instrumental in helping to establish the PATH Court Project which provided for the delivery of mental health counseling and housing of misdemeanor clients charged with "quality of life" crimes. As the department's representative to the Mental Health Task Force, he was instrumental in pre-planning the Community Court Project to implement the current program in Van Nuys Court. This program directs misdemeanor defendants out of the criminal justice system and into programs of counseling and community service as an alternative to jail. Not only are the defendants placed in a more appropriate and beneficial setting to the individual and the community as a whole, but it results in a reduction of inmates incarcerated in jail and a cost savings to the Courts, the Sheriff, and the County of Los Angeles. Another example of his innovative ideas which improved efficiency and the quality of legal services provided to the public include the recommendation of a procedure to the Superior Court which would allow for virtually all welfare fraud cases to be handled pre-trial in one department. This procedure freed other courtrooms up from handling these very time consuming cases each day and allowed the one assigned courtroom to have better control over the collection of restitution from the defendants. One courtroom handling these same cases on an on-going basis created efficiencies and cost savings for the Public Defender, the District Attorney and the court in the handling of these cases.

In Mr. Vacca's 35 years with the Law Offices of the Public Defender he has proven himself to be an outstanding manager who is dedicated to the clients the Department represents, the legal system of the County of Los Angeles, the Public Defender's Office and the County of Los Angeles. His many ideas, his implementation and oversight of new processes and procedures, and his tireless devotion to his assignments have resulted in an improved quality of legal representation provided by this office combined with significant savings to the County of Los Angeles. I strongly believe that Mr. Vacca has earned the assignment to which he is being appointed and that his compensation is appropriate with the duties he is being asked to perform.

The Department has three budgeted Bureau Chief positions of which two are vacant. Mr. Vacca will fill one of the two vacancies. It is critical to immediately fill the vacancies to ensure the proper functioning and running of the Department. I am requesting an expedited processing of this request. I would like to announce the appointments on Monday, January 12, 2004. Mr. Vacca is a reachable incumbent on the Bureau Chief Certification List (Exam number L-9260-C) which had expired in January 2003 and was extended one year. This list will expire in three weeks.

Debbie Lizzari
January 8, 2004
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If you have any questions, you may contact Chief Deputy Bob Kalunian at (213) 974-7060.

MPJ:REK:
DJ:dj

Attachments

A: Eva Snider
Rosemary Gutierrez